

Bigfork Steering Committee Minutes
February 7, 2008
bigforksteering.org
(Amended)

Regular Attendees: Edd Blackler, John Bourquin, Craig Wagner, Pat Wagner, Elna Darrow, Clarice Ryan, Julie Spencer, Paul Rana, Shelley Gonzales, Paul Guerrant, Alex Strickland, Marilyn Graham, Gordon Graham, Darrel Coverdell, Gary Ridderhoff, and approximately 30 of our neighbors.

The Meeting was called to order by Chairman Craig Wagner at 7:02 PM

Introductions: Craig introduced the members of the BSC Executive Committee, BLUAC Members present, introduced Shelley Gonzales as the Chairwoman of the rewrite team and in absentia Sue Hanson. Shelley has spent many, many hours on this final revision along with Sue who did a lot of typing.

Agenda: The agenda was adopted as amended adding 2 speakers Pat Wagner and Shelley Gonzales (m/sc Gough/Rana)

Pat asked everyone how they liked the sound system which is now used at the Planning Board and we have part of it for our meeting tonight. Craig put Jeff Harris in contact with Radio Active in Kalispell and the County purchased a nice system.

Shelley wanted to thank all the people who have contributed to this project, starting with the Community that donated \$15,000.00 dollars to this project (all spent), hundreds of volunteers, survey writers, tally persons and especially Don Loranger, who compiled all the data. She also mentioned all the committee people then singled some of them in the audience. She also mentioned the purpose of this meeting was to explain the newly added Land Use Designation Map. She thanked BJ Grieve from the planning board for his invaluable help. He reviewed the first plan we submitted a year ago last March and because of staffing problems had to put it on hold but it is now done. He is here tonight to explain that map. She then introduced him to the audience.

Craig suspended the minutes and read the ground rules for questions and comments and then turned the meeting over to BJ.

BJ mentioned he has a PowerPoint presentation which will show how this land designation took place. This is not a zoning map. A future land use designation map uses the policies that are contained within the neighborhood plan, puts them into a map for guidance. This sets up general areas of where growth should occur based on those policies. This map has no regulatory authority it is used for guidance only. As an example, if you have a policy that states specific items must be present for a certain zone then you must look for areas that have those items i.e. paved roads, density and utilities to name some. Since we know we will be having growth we took and over laid maps to see where the requirements for the different policies in the plan occurred and we based our growth projections on those. If you live in an area that is on the map and we designated it for a different use sometime in the next 20 years, does not mean it will happen. You or your heirs would have to get the correct zone before anything could be done. However, if your neighbor decides to do some developing and gets a zone change say for higher density, you might be faced with that in the future.

BJ then asked for questions from the public.

Clarice Ryan: If you have 87 acres and you are zoned for Ag 80, can you sell off the 7 and be rezoned as 7 acres is not a good amount of land for a farm?

BJ: Ag 80 cannot be served for higher density as of the adoption of the 1993 Bigfork Zoning Plan.

Clarice Ryan: What if it was sold before the adoption?

BJ: Then it would be grandfathered. They could do anything they wanted. There are many reasons for this, AG 80 is too far from the fire department, too many graveled roads, to name a few. There are Permitted and Conditional Use permits for specific uses which can be found in the zoning book or online.

Edd Blackler: If the operation of the conditional use permit is vacated for 180 days then it reverts back to the correct zone.

BJ: Absolutely

Ed Guy: On an earlier slide I saw .5, what can be done with a 10th of an acre?

BJ: It is an urban residential lot and usually a subdivision with high density. Limited to people who can't afford 5 acres and it is good for those who want a smaller place and variety. It is a marketable product.

Clarice Ryan: Where is there an affordable housing location? And could you explain the land trust that has been in the papers.

BJ: There is affordable housing in Somers, run by a private concern, land trusts are mainly in the cities of Kalispell, Columbia Falls and Hungry Horse. The county has no administrator for these programs.

Craig and BJ: The board of adjustment just approved a conditional use permit for 8 more Senior and low income units being built in Crestview.

BJ: This plan has been in revision for 3 years and now this is what is going to happen from this meeting. Next week at the regular meeting of the BSC on Thursday, February 14, 2008 there will be a joint meeting with BLUAC at 12:00 pm (open to the public) When the BSC and BLUAC finish with reviewing they will sign and send it to the Planning Department where we have a timeline as to when it will be reviewed by us, come back to the BLUAC for approval and more public comments. Then it goes back to the Planning Board to review any recommendations from BLUAC then it goes to the Flathead County Planning Board for review and more public comments. It will be forwarded to the commissioners, if they decide to adopt they will pass a resolution of intent to adopt. There will be another 30 days for public comment. If all goes well they would sign the adoption and it becomes effective the day they sign. There are no zone changes in this Bigfork Neighborhood Plan.

Carol Venable: What is the proposed time frame for approval?

BJ: If this was turned in tomorrow I see it going to the planning board in May so final completion would be mid or late summer.

Mary Jo Naïve: Is this the final map for designated land use?

BJ: Yes it is

MaryJo Naïve: How many landowners were affected?

BJ: We sent out 400 letters but that was because we included close neighbors but somewhere in the neighborhood of 200. The areas we designated are relatively small compared by the amount of growth that is expected but that is because we took an inventory of what we have already planned out there.

I disagree with you Bill The survey was sent out to everyone that needed to have it. We have a democratic society here and that means the majority rules. Bigfork has changed and we need to have a good neighbor policy and I respect my neighbors and their rights. Venable did not leave written comment. Duly noted

Comment: Bill Myers

Bayside Park

The survey was not scientific. My business never received a survey, I received one personally.

Myers did not leave written comment .Shelley Gonzales stated survey was sent one to each household.

Ed Guy asked for a clarification on suburban residential classification on North Holt to Kehoes Agate Shop.

Shelley Gonzales: Shelley explained the classification and told Mr. Guy that it had already been noted, they were doing clean up work on the map.

Comments on Cards handed to me after the meeting adjourned.

Comment: Paul and Kathy Eslick

300 Swan Highway, Bigfork MT.

As the owners of the largest parcel of property on Highway 83 and Bigfork Stage Rd that is proposed for suburban residential land use, we approve of this land use designation for our property. Duly Noted

Comment: Brett Thuma

Thuma Gallery

It is clear that Flathead County regulations need to be strengthened to assist Bigfork in more orderly growth. Many developers are taking advantage of loopholes to abuse the system. The neighborhood plan is good for now but in my opinion should be strengthened in the next revision. Duly noted

There were no more comments or questions. BJ thanked everyone for coming, and then we continued with the agenda.

Minutes: A motion was made to accept the minutes of January 24, 2008 as emailed (m/sc Gough/Rana/Venable).

Treasurer's Report: Chuck reported we had some expenditure of \$86.00 at UPS. Our balance is now \$3169.17. Chuck has submitted a letter of resignation. He has accepted a position on the BLUAC Board and in accordance with the BSC by laws he must resign. Chuck also will help the new treasurer get started. A motion was made to accept the Treasurer's report (m/sc Darrow, G/ Blackler)

Craig asked for more Public Comments. There were none.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:20

Pat Wagner, Secretary.

Katie Brown: Does the county have the infrastructure to keep up with all the rapid growth we are planning on?

BJ: The bottom line is the final decision is on the commissioners' desk. The planning board makes recommendations but when it goes to the commissioners theirs is the final decision. The Neighborhood Plan is not regulatory.

Verdell Jackson: Does the plan allow for a subdivision with a wells and septic rather than hooking up to a centralized sewer?

Flathead County defers to the Department of Environmental Quality and State Regulations and also DEQ regulations

Comment: Verdell Jackson

State Senator

You need to consider cluster development with self contained wells and high quality sewage treatment. Julie spoke with him after the meeting to explain Level 2 Septic Systems do not meet County regulations

Katie Brown: Does the change in the Flood Plain map affect our plan?

We got the complete story from BJ. There are 4 Organizations involved, FEMA, Glacier Bank, Wells Fargo and First American Floods. Our map has not changed, it remains the same. Our map went through a map modernization process in September of last year. This was a highly sophisticated process that I don't quite understand it myself but it uses aerial photos under laying the old data and gives new information. Now the new maps have details, such as trees, buildings, and roads. Because of the different mapping processes it appears different but they are not. Now First American Flood a flood determination company based in Texas has 2 clients in Bigfork, Glacier Bank and Wells Fargo. So when they saw the new map they said it changed and letters went out to lenders. The letters used wrong terminology like revision. If you contact your lender they will put you in touch with First Flood and you can tell them that the map was not revised but went through a map modernization procedure.

Clarice Ryan: She asked about steep slopes and stream setbacks.

BJ: There are no regulations about building on steep slopes and setbacks. If you come in and ask for a zone change we probably will take a look at your area on the map and not recommend it but again there is the planning board and the county commissioners.

Jill Mehall: asked how many homes are there for all year people, or summer residents.

BJ: I don't have that information.

Comment: Jill Mehall

Creative Native

stated she has seen a lot of change in Bigfork since she has been here, we now have trash in the streets, wildlife in danger, lots of homes for sale. We need to have control because of greedy people. Duly noted

Comment: Bill Myers

Bayside Park

I am objecting to the revision of the neighborhood plan, the old one was good, the survey was all done wrong, no random sampling, was not sent out to everyone, arbitrary, capricious, takes away property rights

Myers did not leave written comments. Duly Noted

Comment: Carol Venable

Woods Bay